

We claim:

1. An access point operable to provide wireless network access to client devices coupled to a wireless network, the access point comprising:
an external indication of the access point's proximity to another access point, said another access point also for providing to client devices access to the wireless network.
2. The access point of claim 1 wherein the external indication is an LED, and wherein the LED blinks at a rate that is related to the proximity of the access point to said another access point.
3. An access point operable to provide wireless network access to client devices coupled to a wireless network, the access point comprising:
a controller capable of producing a network map that indicates the access point's proximity relative to other access points that are coupled to the network.
4. The access point of claim 3 wherein the controller comprises logic for:
listening for other access points coupled to the wireless network;
making a list of heard access points;
successively reducing transmit power;
ordering the list of heard access points based on which access points can still be heard each time transmit power is reduced.

5. An access point operable to provide wireless network access to client devices coupled to a wireless network, the access point comprising:

a controller capable of monitoring wireless network traffic to ascertain whether wireless network traffic has exceeded a threshold, the controller capable of indicating to other access points coupled to the wireless network that said other access points should prepare to accept new client devices, the controller capable of releasing some client devices so that wireless network traffic no longer exceeds the threshold.

6. An access point operable to provide wireless network access to client devices coupled to a wireless network, the access point comprising:

a controller capable of automatically choosing one of a plurality of radio frequencies on which to operate, said controller choosing said frequency after evaluating frequencies on which other access points may be operating.

7. The access point of claim 6, the controller further comprising:

- a. logic for picking a frequency;
- b. logic for transmitting on said frequency;
- c. logic for receiving on said frequency;
- d. logic for evaluating whether other access points are heard on said frequency;
- e. logic for reducing transmission power;
- f. logic for evaluating whether said other access points are still heard on said frequency;

g. logic for storing the transmission power at which no other access points are heard;

h. logic for picking a next frequency as the frequency and repeating steps b-g until all of the plurality of frequencies has been picked;

i. logic for comparing said stored transmission powers;

j. logic for choosing for operation the frequency associated with the highest stored transmission power.

8. A method comprising the steps of:

providing an access point operable to provide wireless network access to client devices coupled to a wireless network;

providing on the access point an external indication of the access point's proximity to another access point, said another access point also for providing to client devices access to the wireless network.

9. The method of claim 8 wherein the external indication is an LED and the wherein the step of providing on the access point an external indication of the access point's proximity to another access point includes the step of:
causing the LED to blink at a rate that is related to the proximity of the access point to said another access point.

10. A method comprising the steps of:

providing an access point operable to provide wireless network access to client devices coupled to a wireless network,
producing by the access point a network map that indicates the access point's proximity relative to other access points that are coupled to the network.

11. The method of claim 10 wherein the step of producing comprises:
listening for other access points coupled to the wireless network;
making a list of heard access points;
successively reducing transmit power;
ordering the list of heard access points based on which access points can still be heard each time transmit power is reduced.
12. A method comprising the steps of:
providing an access point operable to provide wireless network access to client devices coupled to a wireless network;
monitoring by the access point wireless network traffic to ascertain whether wireless network traffic has exceeded a threshold, the controller capable of indicating to other access points coupled to the wireless network that said other access points should prepare to accept new client devices, the controller capable of releasing some client devices so that wireless network traffic no longer exceeds the threshold.

13. A method comprising the steps of:

providing an access point operable to provide wireless network access to client devices coupled to a wireless network;
automatically choosing by the access point one of a plurality of radio frequencies on which to operate, after evaluating frequencies on which other access points may be operating.

14. The method of claim 13, wherein the step of automatically choosing comprises the steps of:

- a. picking a frequency;
- b. transmitting on said frequency;
- c. receiving on said frequency;
- d. evaluating whether other access points are heard on said frequency;
- e. reducing transmission power;
- f. evaluating whether said other access points are still heard on said frequency;
- g. storing the transmission power at which no other access points are heard;
- h. picking a next frequency as the frequency and repeating steps b-g until all of the plurality of frequencies has been picked;
- i. comparing said stored transmission powers;
- j. choosing for operation the frequency associated with the highest stored transmission power.

15. A program product comprising a computer readable medium having embodied therein a computer program for storing data, the computer program comprising:

logic for causing an external indication of an access point's proximity to another access point, said access point and said another access point for providing to client devices access to a wireless network.

16. The program product of claim 15 wherein the external indication is an LED, and wherein the logic for causing an external indication causes the LED to blink at a rate that is related to the proximity of said access point to said another access point.

17. A program product comprising a computer readable medium having embodied therein a computer program for storing data, the computer program comprising:

logic for operation in an access point, the access point operable to provide wireless network access to client devices coupled to a wireless network, the logic for producing a network map that indicates the access point's proximity relative to other access points that are coupled to the network.

18. The program product of claim 17 wherein the logic comprises:

logic for listening for other access points coupled to the wireless network;

logic for making a list of heard access points;

logic for successively reducing transmit power;

logic for ordering the list of heard access points based on which access points can still be heard each time transmit power is reduced.

19. A program product comprising a computer readable medium having embodied therein a computer program for storing data, the computer program comprising:

logic for operation in an access point, the access point operable to provide wireless network access to client devices coupled to a wireless network, the logic for: monitoring wireless network traffic to ascertain whether wireless network traffic has exceeded a threshold;

indicating to other access points coupled to the wireless network that said other access points should prepare to accept new client devices;

releasing some client devices so that wireless network traffic no longer exceeds the threshold.

20. A program product comprising a computer readable medium having embodied therein a computer program for storing data, the computer program comprising:

logic for operation in an access point, the access point operable to provide wireless network access to client devices coupled to a wireless network, the logic for automatically choosing one of a plurality of radio frequencies on which to operate, the logic choosing said frequency after evaluating frequencies on which other access points may be operating.

21. The program product of claim 20, the logic comprising:

- a. logic for picking a frequency;
- b. logic for transmitting on said frequency;

- c. logic for receiving on said frequency;
- d. logic for evaluating whether other access points are heard on said frequency;
- e. logic for reducing transmission power;
- f. logic for evaluating whether said other access points are still heard on said frequency;
- g. logic for storing the transmission power at which no other access points are heard;
- h. logic for picking a next frequency as the frequency and repeating steps b-g until all of the plurality of frequencies has been picked;
- i. logic for comparing said stored transmission powers;
- j. logic for choosing for operation the frequency associated with the highest stored transmission power.